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of persecution to an ideal region created by his own imagination.

"Will it, dear goddess, and thou wilt be free,

Or Ireland is no more a land for thee !

Go : spread thy wings : direct thy airy flight

To heaven, or on some other region light,
Where harmony exists, where laws are mild,

Where flourish flowers that never were defild

By faction's breath, by prejudice or ill :

Like those which scatter ruin on our hills,

Destructive, baneful as the scorpion's sting,

The blighting mildew, or the tempest's wing !

Explore (if such there be,) a happy land,
Where superstition waves no sorceress wand.

A spot of bliss, where all alike are free,

In rank, opinion, order and degree :

Where no distinction arbitrary reigns,

Where speech is free, where language clanks no chains,

Worth estimated, virtuous deeds rewarded,

Merit repaid, and interest disregarded,

Religion treated with deserved respect,

By all, in fine, of whatsoever sect ;

And where true social unity prevails,

And justice regulates the civil scales."

To point out the many beautiful and sublime passages in the Irish Catholic would require more judgment and discrimination than I can pretend to. Indeed it would

require an abler pen than mine. I am confident, however, that if the most competent critic were to enter into a minute analysis of this production, he would find its defects, in comparison with its poetical beauties, like diminutive specks on a luminary. No eulogium of mine can add ought to the estimation in which it is held : for a work on which is stamped such poetical excellence "needs no fuel, it shines by its own light."

It is equally distinguished for being variegated with deep reflections and striking allusions, which are acumined to an *attic* point of satire, as for being illuminated by the splendid galaxies of a fertile poetical genius, which diffuse through the whole composition the unsullied lustre of Pope, and the gorgeous and classical erudition of Dryden ; every passage is strongly marked by grandeur in the thought, and felicity in the expression. In a word, the author of the Irish Catholic has arrayed the majesty of truth in the most graceful drapery of fancy, ornamented by the fairest flowers that poetical genius could select in the fields of imagination.

I will conclude, by earnestly recommending this sublime and patriotic poem to the perusal of all liberal and unprejudiced Irishmen,

I am, &c.

PYTHIAS.

Castle-Guard, Ardee, March, 1813.

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

AFRICAN INSTITUTION.

Report of the Commissioners of African Inquiry relative to the present State of the Coast of Africa, and of the Slave Trade.

The Slave Trade is at present carried on to a vast extent ; and as the continuation or suppression of this inhuman traffic appears to be the great hinge on which the future welfare of Africa turns, we shall begin with stating its present condition, and the obstacles which prevent, and probably will long prevent, its being put an end to.

This trade having been carried on principally by the English before the abolition took place, a vast diminution of the usual number of ships thus employed immediately followed the passing of the laws

for that purpose ; and, as America had passed some severe laws to the same effect, it was reasonably hoped, both in England and Africa, that a mortal blow had been struck against this traffic, as the only two great maritime people who could effectually carry it on, had now, according to all appearance, willingly abandoned it.

The natives themselves began to entertain the same opinion ; the slaves which were brought down from the interior remained unsold, and were either sent back to the interior, or gradually dispersed as domestic slaves. As far as our inquiries have been able to discover, none of them were murdered in this part of Africa.

A cessation of the trade did indeed take place for several months ; but this space

was much too short to afford any criterion whereby to judge of the future indolence or exertions of the Africans, in the event of the Slave Trade being effectually done away.

The great advantages to be derived from occupying the openings thus left on the coast of Africa, by the retreat of the English, were soon perceived by the Americans, particularly those of the Southern States, who setting the laws of their country at defiance, have boldly engaged to an immense extent in this trade, covering their vessels by a fictitious sale, at the Havannah, Teneriffe, or any other of the Spanish colonies, where they are easily furnished with false papers. Lately, this scheme has been extended, in a small degree, to Madeira and the Azores; the paltry island of St. Bartholomew also prostitutes the Swedish flag to similar purposes.

But the Spanish flag is generally preferred, and covers not only Americans, but also (there is great reason to believe,) a considerable number of vessels actually British property. The American master and crew generally continue on board after the nominal transfer, and two foreigners, under the denomination of captain and supercargo, are added to the ship. It frequently happens, this nominal captain is some poor lad who has never been at sea before, but whose services to carry the papers can be had cheap.

The object of these Spanish-Americans is to fill Cuba, Florida, Louisiana, and the southern deserts of North America, with slaves; an extent of evil, compared with which the former supply of our West India settlements sinks into a trifle: a vast field is also opening to them in South America, which will not be neglected. A letter (taken in one of the vessels lately condemned at Sierra Leone) from a principal merchant at Buenos Ayres, to his correspondent at Philadelphia, expresses his astonishment at the supineness of the Americans, in not carrying thither cargoes of slaves, seeing how much they are wanted.

By the autumn of 1809, the coast of Africa swarmed with vessels thus equipped and documented; and it was not until the arrival of a small squadron of his Majesty's vessels early in the next year, that any interruption could be given to their proceedings.

Even then many doubts arose as to the legality of their detention; but, the officer commanding the squadron being resolved to

put the business to the test, several of them were seized and condemned in the court of Vice-Admiralty at Sierra Leone; since which, the decision of the privy-council, in the case of the *Amédie*, (delivered by Sir William Grant,) seems to leave little doubt as to the legality of these sentences.

Most of these captures have been made on the coast and rivers adjacent to Sierra Leone; it being judged to be an object of primary importance, to remove, if possible, such an obstacle to improvement from the neighbourhood of that settlement.

Some of these vessels had not yet received their slaves on board; but their capture had nevertheless deprived the slave-dealers of the means of carrying off about 2,800 Africans; and out of other captures, 471 men, 196 women, and 421 children, have been released from slavery. A considerable number of the nearest and dearest kindred, husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, who had been kidnapped or stolen at various times, and put on board different vessels, have been thus unexpectedly restored to each other at Sierra Leone; and whenever any of them have desired to return to their own country, and such return has been deemed practicable, they have been allowed to do so; being first provided with a paper under the hand and seal of the governor, certifying that they are to be considered as his people, and under his protection; which is looked upon, according to the customs and laws of Africa, to be a sufficient security against further molestation.

All the people thus returning home, must naturally be more than ever the enemies of slavery, as they cannot fail, in the last four eventful months of suffering and liberation, to have acquired some new ideas of freedom, which will, of course, be gradually diffused amongst their friends; and seeing that all white men are not their enemies, but that one European nation considers the Slave Trade as unlawful, and is determined, if possible, to put an end to it, the natives may, by degrees, feel some encouragement to liberate themselves from this horrible thralldom.

The right of making slaves seems formerly to have been confined to the kings or chiefs; but on the west coast of Africa, where power is so diffused, that it is difficult to say with whom any tolerable share rests, the constant practice at present is, for the people in general to kidnap each

other, wherever one party is personally stronger than the other, and has connections sufficiently numerous to secure his victim.

The interruption and annoyance which the Slave Trade has lately met with between Goree and Sierra Leone, has given it a considerable blow.* As long as it is carried on by vessels liable to seizure (such as the Spanish Americans), the coast from the latter place to the river Nunez, would be nearly free from this evil, were it not for the Portuguese settlement of Bissao, which, instead of furnishing, as formerly, a small number of slaves annually to Brazil, is now becoming the emporium of the Slave-trade in this part of Africa. There the ships lie secure from seizure, and thither the slaves are safely conveyed, along the shores in canoes and small craft, from the Scarcies, Pongas, Nunez, and other rivers in this neighbourhood. No good remedy seems applicable to this evil, but the direct interference of the Portuguese government.

But the great scene of the Slave-trade is on the coast of Whydah, the Bight of Benin, Gaboon, and the Portuguese settlements in Congo and Angola. We have no means here of ascertaining the extent to which it is carried on: but, according to the general opinion of the best informed Spaniards and Portuguese, who have been brought into this port, the annual importation was (in the beginning of

1810) considered, at a moderate computation, to be 40,000 for Brazil, 40,000 for the Havannah and Cuba. The Portuguese part of this trade is carried on almost entirely in ships and vessels actually Portuguese. Some merchants owners are supposed to be the real owners of a few; and the Americans of a few more. Very few real Spanish ships are employed; the great mass of vessels under the Spanish flag on the coast of Africa, are actually Americans; several are supposed to belong to British merchants.

The slave-vessels which are by far the most numerous, and of course most obvious to the examination of our cruisers, are Americans, commonly under Spanish, but in some few instances under other false colours. The decision of the Privy Council, on a case of appeal, has determined, that vessels so circumstanced, are liable to confiscation. But the difficulty of producing the necessary proofs, renders their detention generally hazardous; and the increasing experience of those traders rendering detection more and more difficult every day, nothing is to be expected from our cruisers in any degree commensurate to the extent of the evil.

But allowing that no vessel be permitted to pass which is liable to good ground of suspicion, still, it is to be feared, that without some great restriction by Spain and her colonies, and some further limitation on the part of Portugal, no effectual means are in the power of Great Britain to stop such an extensive and lucrative trade. It is also extremely difficult even to catch the vessels which are supposed contraband; most of them sail extremely well, are perfectly on their guard, and have the advantage of directing their voyage to too many distant ports across the Atlantic, to allow of any important molestation from our cruisers.

The cruisers, at present on this station, have lately made four distinct sweeps along the coast down to Prince's Island. Out of many slave-ships which were boarded, only one has been caught under circumstances which would admit her being brought up for adjudication.

Upon a careful review of the whole case, it would seem that the following conclusions may fairly be drawn:

That we have not sufficient means to prevent the Slave-trade in general from being carried on; but if, instead of opposing it generally, we confine ourselves

* In conformity to the 51st of George the Third, chap. 23, which renders it felony to deal in slaves, Samuel Samo, Joseph Peters, and William Tufft, have been brought to trial, at Sierra Leone, for this atrocious crime. The proceedings were carried on, with a solemnity becoming the occasion, before Dr. Thorpe, Chief Justice of Sierra Leone; a grand jury found true bills against the accused, and, after trials of considerable length, a petit jury pronounced them severally guilty. Samo's counsel pleaded in arrest of judgment, that he was a Dutchman, which was overruled by the judges; but, as several African Chiefs petitioned for his pardon, and it appeared that he had it greatly in his power to assist in suppressing the trade, he was pardoned. Peters was sentenced to be transported to Botany Bay for seven years; and Tufft to be kept to three years' hard labour on the public works.

for the present to some one branch of it, there is a great probability of our success there, and of a constant gradual extension of that success at a more remote period.

No difficulty can occur in choosing the particular part to which we should confine our exertions. The leeward coast, all that part which is generally called the Bight of Benin, is too unhealthy to admit much cruising; or the formation of a new establishment on some of the islands, if Portugal would cede one of them for that purpose. As to the Gold Coast, we have already as many forts as can be desired there; but little benefit is to be expected from their co-operation in the extinction of the Slave-trade, as they do not possess authority or influence enough to prevent its being carried on, even under their guns.

THE NATIONAL VACCINE ESTABLISHMENT.

The following satisfactory Report to the Secretary of State, was lately made by Drs. Milner and Hervey, relative to the progress and success of the Vaccine Inoculation.

The Board of the National Vaccine Establishment have the honour of reporting; that, during the year 1811, the surgeons appointed by their authority to the nine stations in London, have vaccinated 3,148 persons, and have distributed 23,794 charges of vaccine lymph to the public. The number vaccinated this year rather exceeds that of the year 1810, and the demand for lymph has been often so great that it could not be immediately supplied.

They have great satisfaction in stating, that, since the commencement of this establishment, not a single instance of the accession of small-pox, after vaccination, has occurred to any of the vaccinating surgeons of the nine stations.

The Board report, that they have been lately furnished with many satisfactory official documents from the naval and military departments of government, respecting the progress of vaccination, and have likewise obtained some other authentic papers on the subject, containing much important information. They think it expedient to lay before you a summary of their contents.

It appears, that, in consequence of an order from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, vaccination has been practised in the navy to a great extent; and, although it has not been universally adopted, the mortality from the small-pox, a-

mong seamen, is already greatly diminished.

In the army, the practice of vaccination has been long established, by an order from the Commander in Chief, and its effects have been decidedly beneficial: for almost the only persons among the troops who have lately been affected with small-pox, have been either recruits, who had received the infection previous to their enlistment, or soldiers who had not been vaccinated, on the supposition of their having had the variolous disease. Thus, with a few exceptions, a disorder formerly so fatal to the troops, is now considered as nearly extinguished in the army.

By information transmitted to the Board from their numerous correspondents in all parts of the country, it appears that vaccination is almost every where gaining ground, throughout the British dominions; though its progress is very different in different places; and it is found that the number of deaths from the small-pox is uniformly decreasing, in proportion as vaccination becomes more general, and the inoculation of the small-pox declines.

The disappearance of the small-pox from the island of Ceylon, was noticed in the Report of last year; and the Board has now the pleasure of stating, from sources of authentic and satisfactory information, that, in consequence of vaccination, this dreadful disease has in no instance lately occurred in the island of Anglesey, in the populous city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in the town of Petworth, or in the adjoining district.

Through the different counties of England, the practice of vaccination is becoming general, and the small-pox is gradually declining; and even in London, where the opposition to the new inoculation has been most violent, it is prevailing; and its salutary effects are becoming daily more evident. At present, by the best estimate we are able to make, it appears that nearly two-thirds of the children annually born in the metropolis, are vaccinated either by charitable institutions or private practitioners; and that the number of deaths by small-pox has proportionally decreased. Previous to the discovery of vaccination, the average number of deaths by small-pox within the bills of mortality, was 2,000 annually; whereas, in the last year, only 751 persons have died of that disease, although the increase of population within the last ten years has been 133,139. The increase of population throughout Great